The subsidiary has 16 mills under it. Due to net worth erosion NTC (WBAB&O) was referred to BIFR on 15-1-1993 and declared sick on 8-7-1993. The BIFR had formed *a prima-facie* opinion for winding up the company and had issued a show cause notice to this effect.

On the basis of a viability study made by NTC, Government is considering a revised turn around plan for the viable subsidiaries of NTC alongwith the viable mills under them keeping in view the BIFR norms of net worth of these mills turning positive within the period prescribed by BIFR. The interest of the workers will be kept in mind.

Closure of Jute Purchasing Centres in Tripura

2906. SHRI KHAGEN DAS : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to State :

(a)whether JCI has closed down three jute purchasing centres in Tripura;

(b)if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what was the volume of jute purchase from the growers of Tripura by the JCI during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99; and

(d) what perceiitage of the total produce of jute in the State was purchased by JCI during the said period and what was the time gap between the growers readying the crop for sale and the approach of JCI for purchase ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir

In order to make JCI more cost effective, a restructuring programme of JCI centres in all the jute growing States was undertaken on an objective basis and after several rounds of discussions with all concerned, it was decided to close down 3 purchase centres in the State of Tripura viz. Khowai DPC, Mohanpur sub-centre and Bishramganj sub-centre along-with other 34 uneconomic centres based on their past performances, On the other hand it was decided to upgrade the existing Kalyanpur sub-centre to a full-fledged Departmental Purchase Centres for augmenting its purchase capacity.

(c) and (d) During the period from 1996-97 to 1999-2000. the JCI was called upon to undertake price support operation only in 1997-98 in Tripura during which a total volume of 5,400 bales of raw jute was purchased under

price support operation against the estimated total production of 37,000 bales in the State of Tripura i.e. 14.6%. JCI has been purchasing jute as and when prices fall below MSP

Restructuring of NIC Mills

2907. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to State :

(a)whether Government proposed to close non-viable mills, revive viable units and introduce Voluntar>' Retirement Scheme (VRS) for workers in the NTC mills; and

(b)if so, the progress made in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) : (a) and (b) On the basis of a viability study made by NTC, Government is considering a revised turn around plan for the viable subsidiaries of NTC alongwith the viable mills under them keeping in view the BIFR norms of net worth of these mills turning positive within the period prescribed by BIFR. The interest of the workers will be kept in mind. VRS is in operation in NTC. 61517 employees have taken VRS till 31-12-99.

Assets held by NHHDC. Guwahati

2908. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to State :

(a)the net share capital assets and list of immovable properties held by North-Eastern Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation indicating details, release of the share capital, purpose of release and utility made;

(b)whether the Guwahati office of the NHHDC is still maintained in the residential building of a flood prone area since inception or a proposal for outright purchase of an operational office at Guwahati was made; and

(c) if so, the location and detail plan finalised to utilise this operational area indicating action plan to activate this corporation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The total share capital of North-Eastern Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation (NHHDC) is